

C 2/3. The barrier assembly of claim 1, wherein the first cross-bar is pivotally connected between the first and second gate segments adjacent to a first lateral edge of the first and second gate segments.

3/3. The barrier assembly of claim 2, wherein the first cross-bar is pivotally coupled to the first and second gate segments.

4/4. The barrier assembly of claim 3, wherein the first cross-bar is pivotally coupled to the first and second gate segments by hinges.

5/5. The barrier assembly of claim 4 further comprising a second cross-bar pivotally connected between the first and second gate segments adjacent to a second lateral edge of the first and second gate segments.

6/6. The barrier assembly of claim 5, wherein:  
the first gate segment includes a second pair of guide rollers positioned on opposite lateral sides thereof, each of the second pair of guide rollers being received within a respective one of the pair of guide rails; and

5 the second gate segment includes a second pair of guide rollers positioned on opposite lateral sides thereof, each of the second pair of guide rollers being received within a corresponding one of the pair of guide rails.

C 7/7. The barrier assembly of claim 2, further comprising:  
a first stop coupled to the first substantially vertical portion of at least one of the pair of guide rails and restricting downward movement of the first gate segment when the first gate segment is in its barrier position, and

5. a second stop coupled to the second substantially vertical portion of at least one of the pair of guide rails and restricting downward movement of the second gate segment when the second gate segment is in its barrier position.

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The barrier assembly of claim 8, wherein the first and second gate segments are generally rectangular shaped, each having an upper edge, and wherein an upper edge of each of the first and second gate segments are <sup>adapted to be</sup> approximately 40 to 50 inches from a floor of the loading platform when in their respective barrier positions.

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The barrier assembly of claim 9, wherein each of the first and second gate segments include a horizontal top rail and a horizontal bottom rail welded to a pair of vertical side rails, and wherein the horizontal top rails of the first and second gate segments are <sup>adapted to be</sup> approximately 40 to 50 inches from the floor of the loading platform when in their respective barrier positions.

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The barrier assembly of claim 10, wherein one of the horizontal bottom rails of each of the first and second gate segment are <sup>adapted to be</sup> approximately 20 to 25 inches from the floor of the loading platform when in their respective barrier positions.

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The barrier assembly of claim 11, further comprising:  
a first stop coupled to one of the pair of guide rails and restricting downward movement of the first gate segment when the first gate segment is in its barrier position, and  
a second stop coupled to one of the pair of guide rails and restricting downward movement of the second gate segment when the second gate segment is in its barrier position.

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The barrier assembly of claim 12, wherein the first and second gate segments are generally rectangular shaped, each having an upper edge, and wherein the upper edge of each of

*a* the first and second gate segments are <sup>*adapted to be*</sup> approximately 40 to 50 inches from a floor of the loading platform when in their respective barrier positions.

*13/14* The barrier assembly of claim 1, further comprising:  
a stationary support elevated above the horizontal portions of the pair of guide rails; and

5 a spring mounted between the stationary support and the cross-bar, to reduce an amount of force needed to lift the first and second gate segments when in the respective first and second substantially vertical portions of the pair of guide rails.

15. The barrier assembly of claim 1, further comprising a plurality of substantially rigid cross-bars pivotally coupled together in series between the first and second gate segments, providing a segmented first cross-bar.

16. The barrier assembly of claim 15, further comprising a roller extending from at least one pivot point connecting two of the plurality of substantially rigid cross-bars coupled in series, wherein the roller is received within and guided by one of the guide rails.

*14/14* The barrier assembly of claim 1, further comprising a contact plate extending in front of the first substantially vertical portions of the guide rails.

*a sub* 18. A barrier assembly for protecting ~~an edge of~~ a loading platform, the loading platform having a loading edge and a personnel entrance distal from, and substantially parallel to the loading edge, the barrier assembly comprising:

5 a pair of parallel guide rails, each having a first substantially vertical portion, a second substantially vertical portion opposite the first substantially vertical portion, a substantially horizontal portion extending between top ends of the first and second substantially

1. A barrier assembly for protecting an edge of a loading platform, the loading platform having a loading edge and a personnel entrance distal from, and substantially parallel to the loading edge, the barrier assembly comprising:

a pair of parallel guide rails, each shaped generally as an inverted-U, each having a first substantially vertical portion, a second substantially vertical portion opposite the first substantially vertical portion and a substantially horizontal portion interconnecting the first and second substantially vertical portions;

a first gate segment having at least one pair of rollers positioned on opposite lateral sides thereof, each roller being received within a respective one of the guide rails so that the first gate segment is guided by the pair of guide rails;

a second gate segment having at least one pair of rollers positioned on opposite lateral sides thereof, each roller being received within a respective one of the guide rails so that the second gate segment is guided by the pair of guide rails; and

at least one substantially rigid first cross-bar pivotally connected between the first and second gate segments.

2. The barrier assembly of claim 1, wherein:

the first gate segment is guided by the pair of guide rails from a barrier position in which the first gate segment is positioned entirely within the first substantially vertical portions of the pair of guide rails to an open position in which the first gate segment is positioned at least partially in the substantially horizontal portions of the pair of guide rails;

the second gate segment is guided by the pair of guide rails from a barrier position in which the second gate segment is positioned entirely within the second substantially vertical portions of the pair of guide rails to an open position where the second gate segment is positioned at least partially in the substantially horizontal portions of the pair of guide rails; and

the first cross-bar has a length which requires that when the first gate segment is in its barrier position the second gate segment will be in its open position, and vice-versa.

vertical portions and a pair of curved portions connecting the first and second substantially vertical portions to the substantially horizontal portion;

10 a first gate segment having at least one pair of rollers positioned on opposite lateral sides thereof, each roller being received within a respective one of the guide rails so that the first gate segment is guided by the pair of guide rails;

a second gate segment having at least one pair of rollers positioned on opposite lateral sides thereof, each roller being received within a respective one of the guide rails so that the second gate segment is guided by the pair of guide rails; and

15 at least one substantially rigid first cross-bar pivotally connected between the first and second gate segments;

20 the cross-bar being of a sufficient length so that when the first gate segment is positioned completely within the first substantially vertical portions of the pair of guide rails, the second gate segment will be positioned at least partially within the substantially horizontal portions or the curved portions connecting the second substantially vertical portions to the substantially horizontal portions of the pair of guide rails, and likewise, when the second gate segment is positioned completely within the second substantially vertical portions of the pair of guide rails, the first gate segment will be positioned at least partially within the substantially horizontal portions or the curved portions connecting the first substantially vertical portions to the substantially horizontal portions of the pair of guide rails.

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